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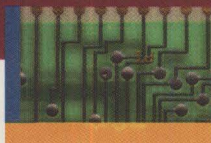
BUYERS' GUIDE

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SPECIAL FEATURE



1997 Buyers' Guide BG1



SYSTEMS

8 Where is It? Examining REXX WHEREIS

By Eric Harper

This article presents WHEREIS, an ISPF/REXX tool that allows users to quickly identify and review/change members within a TSO environment.

18 OpenEdition MVS and the Bourne Shell — A User Experience: Part I

By Evan Galen

This article, the first in a three-part series, presents a fundamental comparison between the OpenEdition MVS shell and the SunOS Bourne shell, examines the environment used for the comparisons, and highlights what successfully tested on OpenEdition MVS.

24 Managing CICS Resource Definitions

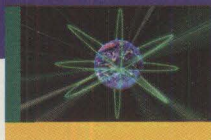
By Richard Tsujimoto

As the number of CICS systems increases at an installation, managing the CICS system definition data set (CSD) becomes more critical and time-consuming.

30 MVS/ESA Problem Solving: IPCS VERBEXIT Commands

By Tom Bryant

This article highlights the little known details about IPCS VERBEXIT commands and how they can be used effectively for problem solving.



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34 Protecting Your Network With and Without Firewalls: Part V — DNS Attacks

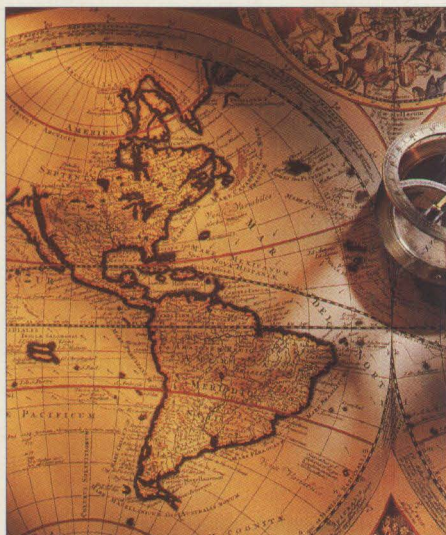
By Mark Bell

The DNS system, which resolves Internet names and addresses, is a target for hackers. While attacks using DNS can never be entirely prevented, a firewall will help to make things less convenient for the hacker.

38 Security Issues for Common Work Tools: Part I — Fax and Email Systems

By Leo A. Wrobel

As a technologist, you know many of the nuts and bolts safeguards behind the maintenance and security of voice mail, fax, and other systems. As a non-legal person, however, it is important to know the security risks as well as the legal exposure presented by these systems.



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Building the Perfect Beast

BY MICHAEL NORTON

As many of you probably already know, I'm the web master at the venerable OS/2 "Must-Have" Utilities, Links & List site (www.musthave.com), and spend an inordinate amount of time installing and experimenting with new products. And, as you might imagine, my system endures battery from the reconfiguration, installation, and uninstallation of software entails. Well, it endures most of the time. However, every six months or so I find myself snookered and have to restore from tape or reinstall OS/2. Usually I select the latter option, simply because some time during the life of the operating system I usually made a design decision which I regretted. A few years ago that might have been something such as not leaving room for the swap file, but along the way I've learned a thing or two, and machines I've installed bear my signature. I take a great deal of pride in my work, and I've come to look at the entire process as "building the perfect beast," to borrow from a Don Henley album title.

PATIENCE: THE FIRST PRINCIPLE

We're going to look at building the perfect beast in the next several columns while I rebuild my OS/2 system — which may very well take several months! The first principle in building an OS/2 system is p-a-t-i-e-n-c-e. Actually this is true not only of OS/2, but any computer system. The most common mistake in building systems is to install everything, immediately. I've even seen this madness at the hardware level, with network adapters, sound cards, internal modems, and other devices all being inserted simultaneously, while the user conveniently had the cover off the unit. The prudent approach to devices, of course, is to install one device, configure it, and test it, before moving to the next device, a procedure which at least gives you a prayer of resolving conflicts. However,

while most technicians cringe at the idea of installing multiple physical devices simultaneously, many do not hesitate when it comes time to load the software.

Most of us know better, of course. We all know that sooner or later some rogue application will waste our meticulously tended system and cause us to scurry for the tape. Unfortunately, often times we're hesitant to use the tape even at that point because the last "clean" backup we have does not include software installed after the offending program, meaning that software would have to be reinstalled and/or reconfigured!

It is not always possible to avoid installing multiple software packages — that's what test partitions are for. Typically, any installation will involve a certain number of clearly defined software packages — a word processor, browser, and dial-up networking, for example, might be the core packages for a domain. These are typically known in advance and can be tested beforehand to uncover any surprises or conflicts, then installed en masse on the user machines. This procedure, of course, is already followed in most large installations and is adhered to with almost religious fervor in an enterprise environment. Unfortunately, it is often neglected in smaller installations, and almost universally ignored in installations on a single machine. I suppose fewer users means more time to install, however.

ACQUAINTING YOURSELF WITH THE SYSTEM

In some ways we're getting ahead of ourselves, however: We don't even have the operating system installed, and we're already talking about application software, albeit to accentuate the desirability of patience in such matters. Before installing OS/2 (or any other operating system, for that matter), it pays to acquaint yourself with the machine on which it will be installed. Gathering documentation

on the machine is an excellent place to start. Comparing the hardware to the list of hardware compatible with OS/2 provided will reveal many potential problems that can be resolved in advance with a visit to the vendor's home page or a call to technical support. Strictly speaking, while many vendors do not support OS/2, I am usually able to locate someone in the organization who is the resident OS/2 guru and who often knows exactly how to make their product work under OS/2 or, in the worst case, can confirm that the product absolutely will not work under OS/2. In any case, it is better to know such things before the installation process is hopelessly stalled at 4 a.m. with users expecting sparkling new OS/2 systems waiting for them in four hours.

Another marvelous resource for device drivers is the OS/2 Device Driver Repository (<http://www.europe.ibm.com/getdoc/psmem/ea/progserv/device/>) maintained by IBM.

STRIVING FOR PERFECTION

So, now we have all of our documentation together. We've done our homework and know not only what hardware we're going to be supporting, we've even got the latest device drivers. Time to bust OS/2 out of the box and load it up, right? Wrong, we've got a few more things to do, for we're not out to just build a beast, but the perfect beast. Next month I'll examine the rest of the pre-install routine. Remember, patience. **ts**

Was this column of value to you? If so, please circle Reader Response Card No. 42.

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